How to Read a SBIR/STTR Specific Topic Solicitation

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How Does the DAF SBIR Program Solicit Proposals?

Two Types of SBIR Solicitations

Open Topics: innovative solutions that have not yet been identified as a need by the warfighter

Conventional ("Specific") Topics: traditional SBIR topics, more narrowly-focused topic areas, applicant proposals typically address a problem statement tailored to a particular Government requiring organization.

Solicitation Methodologies

DAF Commercial Solutions Openings (CSOs):
a. Unitary document
b. Fewer topics per solicitation, usually one and sometimes two
c. All topics in each solicitation will reside in same program and same Phase, i.e. all topics in each will either be Phase I SBIR, Phase I STTR, or D2P2 SBIR

OSD Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs): used for triannual SBIR/STTR conventional topic solicitation cycles promulgated by OSD
a. General solicitation terms and provisions are contained in the OSD "shell" BAA
b. Component-specific terms and provisions are contained within component-specific instructions
c. Mix of Phase I and D2P2 topics within same solicitation

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Defense SBIR/STTR Innovation Portal

Specific Topic Solicitations Released Directly By OSD on the DSIP.

- DSIP is the SBIR-specific Government-Wide Point of Entry (GPE) for the DoD.
- DSIP is a "one stop shop" where applicants can see current SBIR/STTR offerings, archived solicitations, templates, user guides, helpful websites, and submit ALL of their proposal materials.
- All DoD components and affiliated agencies release solicitations through the DSIP.

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OSD Solicitation Structure

Specific Topic Solicitations Released Directly By OSD on the DSIP.

- OSD releases six annual cycle BAAs a year (3 SBIR, 3 STTR)
- OSD maintains two Open out-of-cycle (1 SBIR, 1 STTR) open throughout the calendar year.

Topic Naming - Specific Topic Phase I SBIR

A topic's name tells a story.

Example below = upcoming 23.3 solicitation

AF233-0001

AF = Component (DAF)

23 = Calendar Year

3 = Solicitation Sequence

- **In-cycle solicitation**

- **Out-of-Cycle (OOC) Topics start at 4 (4, 5, 6, 7)**

0001 = topic sequence within that individual solicitation

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Topic Naming - Specific Topic Phase I STTR

A topic's name tells a story.
Example below = upcoming 23.C solicitation

AF23C-T001

AF = Component (DAF)

23 = Calendar Year

C = Solicitation Sequence

- In-cycle solicitation topics start at A, then B, etc.

- Out-of-Cycle (OOC) Topics start at D

T001 = topic sequence within that individual solicitation

Topic Naming - Specific Topic D2P2 SBIR

A topic's name tells a story.
Example below = upcoming 23.3

AF233-D001

AF = Component (DAF)

23 = Fiscal Year (FY)

3 = Solicitation Sequence

- **Annual Cycle Topics start at 1, then 2, then 3, etc.)**

- **Out-of-Cycle Topics start at 4, then 5, etc.**

D001 = topic sequence within that individual solicitation

Specific Topic Annual Cycle Schedule

BAA CYCLE	DATES
DoD SBIR 23.1 / STTR 23.A	Pre-Release: January 11, 2023 Open: February 8, 2023 Close: March 8, 2023
DoD SBIR 23.2 / STTR 23.B	Pre-Release: April 19, 2023 Open: May 17, 2023 Close: June 14, 2023
DoD SBIR 23.3 / STTR 23.C	Pre-Release: August 23, 2023 Open: September 20, 2023 Close: October 18, 2023
DoD SBIR 23.4 / STTR 23.D Annual*	*Annual BAAs have topics released throughout the year with varying open and close dates. Please refer to each topic release document under the Annual BAAs for more information.

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Specific Topic SBIR/STTR Solicitation Structure

Specific Topic solicitations are structured to address the following information:

a. Introduction
b. Program Description
c. Proposal Fundamentals
d. Phase I Proposal
e. Phase I Evaluation Criteria
f. Phase II Proposal Information
g. Contractual Requirements
h. Attachments
i. Component-Specific Instructions (including topics)

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Introduction

1. More or less self-explanatory.
2. This section is intended to introduce/familiarize unfamiliar applicants with the SBIR program.
3. This section establishes and defines follow-on opportunities for Phase I awardees.

Program Description

1. **Objectives of the Program**
2. **Due Diligence Program to Assess Security Risks**
   a. New as of the SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act of 2022
3. **OUSD (R&E) Critical Technology Areas**
   a. Indicates the areas in which DoD is focusing efforts and investments.
4. **Three Phase Program**
   a. Describes each phase and potential activities
5. **Program on Innovation Open Topics***

   *DAF releases Open Topics through Out-Of-Cycle CSOs, but other components *may* include Open Topics in the OSD annual cycle promulgations

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Definitions

- **Key Section!**

    Definitions section provides authoritative and binding definitions for terms and provisions contained not only in the solicitation document, but throughout the entire program.

    This includes terms that also have a vernacular/common meaning that may differ from the SBIR/STTR program definitions.

    E.g. "foreign national", "R/R&D", "commercialization"

Proposal Fundamentals

- **Approximately 21 subsections**
- **"Heavy Hitters" include:**
  - SBC eligibility requirements
  - Disclosures of ties to the PRC and other foreign countries
  - Award Information
  - Research involving Human Subjects, Animal Subjects, Recombinant DNA Molecules
  - Classified Proposals (*aka* do not submit classified proposals)

Phase I Proposal

- Applicable to Phase I proposals only.
- Provides a breakdown of the proposal submission package structure:

  Volume 1: Proposal Cover Sheet

  Volume 2: Technical Volume

  Volume 3: Cost Volume

  Volume 4: Company Commercialization Report

  Volume 5: Other Supporting Documents

  Volume 6: Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Training

Phase I* Evaluation Criteria

- Standardized, and rarely subject to change. Ranked in *descending* order of importance.

    - Criteria A: Technical merit/approach
    - Criteria B: Qualifications of the team
    - Criteria C: Potential for commercialization

*The DAF uses these criteria for D2P2 and Phase II as well, but are sometimes subject to reordering.

Contractual Requirements

This section serves a notice function by providing applicants with a sample of contractual provisions that they cannot expect to see any a resulting SBIR/STTR award, should their proposal be selected.

Phase II Proposal Information

- Describes generally what the company can expect during Phase II.
- Describes steps firms can take to prepare for a potential Phase II award.

Attachments

All topics/proposals have the same 3 required forms available as attachments. Some topics/proposals will require *additional* attachment submission.

1. Contractor Certification Regarding Provision of Prohibition on Contracting for Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment.
2. Disclosure of Foreign Affiliations or Relationships to Foreign Countries
3. Disclosure of Funding Sources

Component-Specific Instructions and Topics

1. These sections modify, explain, clarify, and add to OSD BAA documents.
2. This means that topics are organized by component.
3. DAF offers only Phase I topics for STTR solicitations.
4. DAF follows the following structure for SBIR solicitations:
   a. Phase I
   b. D2P2

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Topic Structure

1. Topic Name, Topic Title
2. OUSD (R&E) Critical Technology Areas
3. Objective
4. Description
5. Phase I
6. Phase II
7. Phase III (Dual-Use)
8. References
9. Keywords

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Still have questions?

Specific Topic: usaf.team@afsbirsttr.us

Open Topic Phase I: p1@afwerx.af.mil

Open Topic Phase II: p2@afwerx.af.mil

STRATFI/TACFI: stratfi.tacfi@afwerx.af.mil

Let us know how we are doing. Please complete the survey as you leave today's meeting.